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NEWS
WORTH
SHARING.**Lessons from Mandela**

Free the Children co-founder Craig Kielburger tells Metro how the global icon helped shape the youth movement

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What's your biggest beef?

It seems snow clearing is one of the top issues Calgarians are complaining about and the mayor is acknowledging it

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For those who hate the cold and snow ...

Turn that frown upside down and warm up with these films from the comfort of your couch

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CANADA POST'S HOME-POST IS HISTORY

DOOR-TO-DOOR DELIVERY BEING REPLACED WITH COMMUNITY MAILBOXES IN URBAN AREAS

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**BRIDGES OF ADDING AND COUNTING**

Numbers crunched in a new report suggest Calgary spends far less on bridges than other cities and the structures are in poorer condition on the whole. Still, city staff say no more spending on bridges is currently needed. For the story, see page 6. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Ring road risk to park 'very real': Coun.**Weaselhead worries.**
Province says new environmental studies coming

City officials need to be "forceful" to ensure the southwest leg of Calgary's ring road doesn't wreck a treasured park, says the area councillor.

Representatives with the city's natural areas department as well as Coun. Brian Pincott huddled with preservationists in separate meetings Wednesday to discuss fears that the multi-billion-dollar freeway will threaten wildlife, sensitive waterways and pristine greenery that many nature-lovers escape to in Calgary's Weaselhead Park.

"These are very real con-

cerns," Pincott said bluntly after talking with members of the Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society. "If the road just gets built without paying attention to those things, we can destroy neighbourhoods, we can destroy the Weaselhead, we can threaten the water supply."

A deal officially voted through by Tsuu T'ina Nation band members in late October will see the provincial government purchase a portion of the park from the city in order to run the ring road through its southwest corner.

Lisa Dahlseide, the preservation society's executive director and education co-ordinator, said major concerns include an indication that the road would not be able to withstand a flood like the one seen this past June, that the province plans to completely

reroute a portion of the Elbow River and that there may be a lack of underpass and culvert space for large mammals to pass through.

Alberta Transportation spokesperson Parker Hogan was quick to point out that environment assessments being reviewed by the society are dated, adding new surveying of the area is still to come now that a formal deal has been signed.

He said the river rerouting is actually a flood-mitigation measure and will only occur within the project's designated right-of-way. The province is also consulting with the Department of National Defence to remove any unexploded ordnance from the area — the Weaselhead previously served as an artillery range for Canadian Armed Forces training. JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

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Calgary s-PARK. Better in theory than in practice

Good idea, poor choice of location.

That's how several members of city council summed up Calgary's first experiment with a pop-up street park — or "s-PARK" — that shut down a section of 10 Street S.W. for two weeks this summer to create a community gathering space in a part of the city starved for park land.

"s-PARK is a great idea, but this location did not go that well," Mayor Naheed Nenshi said during a debriefing on the pilot project. "I received a lot of citizen feedback from people who said, 'I love the idea of temporary parks, but this was a terrible location.'"

One of the biggest problems with the site, located between 6 Avenue and 7 Avenue, was that it had only just recently reopened to traffic, the mayor added.

"It had been closed for construction for so long and when it finally opened, we closed it for a park," he said. "I think a lot of residents went, 'Enough, already!'"

The location also came with hefty parking permits and road-closure fees, which made up the biggest single operating expense for the s-PARK, at \$13,517.

"Some of the learnings were, we shouldn't be doing them on streets where you have to pay for parking," program manager Dawn Thome told the city's priorities and finance committee.

Coun. Druh Farrell said she'd support future s-PARKs, but in more carefully selected sites.

"I can see a number of locations where this would fit in, especially in areas that don't have the park space," Farrell said.

ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO



Snow is removed from a street in Calgary's northeast Skyview Ranch neighbourhood Wednesday afternoon. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Snow clearing tops list of complaints

Forecast. Expect a high of -5 C on Thursday and a 30 per cent chance of afternoon snow, says Environment Canada



ROBSON
FLETCHER

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Caught in unusually bad traffic on 17 Avenue S.W. Wednesday afternoon, Jay Zwaagstra couldn't help but wonder about Calgary's snow-removal strategy.

"Snow removal, to me, is when you plow the snow to the side on snow routes and then come in with a machine and take the snow away," he said. "What they're doing is

just pushing the snow to the side, into the parking lane."

The effect on the busy Beltline thoroughfare, he said, was to effectively reduce traffic to one lane in each direction, as parked cars now occupied travel lanes.

"We're driving along here and we're almost a standstill," Zwaagstra said. "People are cutting down back alleys now because you can't move."

His was just one of numerous complaints Calgarians have had with the state of city roads this week, following several days of snow and frigid temperatures.

"It's clearly the No. 1 or No. 2 source of citizen complaints — and compliments — throughout the whole corporation," Mayor Naheed Nenshi said Wednesday.

The mayor himself has acknowledged the snow-control

Long and winding roads

15,000

The city says there are 15,000 lane kilometres of roadway across Calgary.

failings in some areas but commended city staff for the job they've done under what he described as difficult circumstances.

Calgary's manager of road maintenance Bill Biensch said recent weather "really was outside the typical storm" and crews have been working hard to clear streets, with a focus on major routes first.

"We're simply looking at them and making sure they're passable," he said. "We're not removing snow;

we're just trying to allow traffic to move."

The city puts into motion a seven-day clearing plan when it snows, Biensch added, but with additional snow falling again on Tuesday, the plan was "reset."

"We are in Day 2 of the seven-day play," he said Wednesday.

Residential streets are typically tackled beginning on Day 4, Biensch added, but the city accelerated that for some hard-hit northeast communities Wednesday and sent extra equipment to communities like Skyview Ranch.

He said resource-deployment decisions are based on reports from staff on which areas need the most work.

"We actually have foremen out in the field, taking a look at different streets," he said.

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NEWS



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Alberta superintendents 2012-13 compensation

Naomi Johnson, Calgary Board of Education — 107,104 students

- **Salary:** \$288,134
- **Benefits:** \$75,942
- **Total:** \$364,076

Gary Strother, Calgary Catholic School District — 49,000 students

- **Salary:** \$211,839
- **Benefits:** \$64,048
- **Total:** \$275,887

Joan Carr, Edmonton Catholic School District — 35,546 students

- **Salary:** \$297,055
- **Benefits:** \$31,145
- **Total:** \$328,200

Ontario superintendents 2012-13 compensation

Donna Quan, Toronto District School Board — 256,000 students

- **Salary:** \$272,000
- **Benefits:** \$28,000
- **Total:** \$300,000

Tony Pontes, Peel District School Board — 153,139 students

- **Salary:** \$261,194
- **Benefits:** \$1,799
- **Total:** \$262,993

Ken Thurston, York Region District School Board — 121,400 students

- **Salary:** \$313,961
- **Benefits:** \$12,545
- **Total:** \$326,506

Alberta superintendents' salaries outpace those of bigger boards

Overpriced or fair wage? Three major metro boards offer more than \$300K annually to top execs

 **JEREMY NOLAIIS**
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Alberta's metro school board superintendents are being paid more handsomely than their peers running larger organizations out east, reveals a Metro analysis.

Financial statements for 2012-13 released for Edmonton Catholic School District reveal superintendent Joan Carr took home more than \$328,000, while being responsible for approximately 35,000 students.

In Calgary, financial statements indicate Calgary Catholic School District's top official Gary Strother netted nearly \$276,000 while overseeing an organization responsible for 49,000 students, while

Calgary Board of Education Chief Supt. Naomi Johnson just received a \$364,076 paycheck following her resignation, very likely the largest payout for a top school board official in Canada.

When each superintendent's earnings were divided against the number of kids they were responsible for, it revealed that the CBE's top official was only paid about \$3.40 per student, while Strother earned \$5.63 and Carr pulled in \$9.23.

Johnson, Carr and Schmidt all earned more than the top officials with Canada's three largest school boards in terms of students — all are in Ontario. Donna Quan, head of the Toronto District School Board, earned about

\$300,000, or about \$1.17 per student.

The CBE is the fourth-largest board in Canada.

Jim Gibbons, a senior adviser who helps in the recruiting of superintendents on behalf of the Alberta School Boards Association, said he suspects the discrepancy between Alberta and Ontario education executives is based on economies — and western businesspeople currently have the upper hand.

But Derek Fildebrandt, Alberta director with the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, said the data comparison could suggest Alberta executives are being overpaid.

"How we determine what to pay them is always difficult, but should be relatively competitive with other jurisdictions," he said.

"If we're paying significantly more than major jurisdictions that are responsible for more students, it would be an indication that we are being more than competitive."

WITH FILES FROM LEAH GERMAIN/METRO

Supt. Edgar Schmidt
\$327K

Edmonton Public Schools has not yet made its 2012-13 financials public, but former Supt. Edgar Schmidt earned \$326,698 in 2011-12.



Last year Joan Carr, superintendent of the Edmonton Catholic School Board, took home approximately \$328,000.

METRO FILE



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Traffic flows across Calgary's Centre Street Bridge while a partially frozen Bow River flows beneath it. METRO FILE

Calgary bridges cheaper, crummier, than other cities?

New report.

City could spend more but doesn't need to right now, says roads director



ROBSON FLETCHER
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Just 62 per cent of Calgary's bridges and culverts were rated in "good" or "very good" condition in 2012, below an established benchmark of 70 per cent, but the city's roads director says the situation is manageable within the existing, relatively low budget.

Calgary spent just \$7.03 per square metre of bridge last year, according to a report presented Wednesday to members of city council. Not necessarily, according to city roads director Ryan Jestin.

"Could we always use more money? Of course," Jestin said.

By the numbers

\$2.183M

Calgary's net "Bridges and Structure Spending" in 2012, according to a review of the city's roads operations

which is far below the median of \$13.17 per square metre spent by other, similar municipalities in Canada.

"We're spending less but our quality's lower," said Coun. Andre Chabot. "So should we be spending more to get our quality up?"

Not necessarily, according to city roads director Ryan Jestin.

"We're spending less but our quality's lower," said Coun. Andre Chabot. "So should we be spending more to get our quality up?"

Not necessarily, according to city roads director Ryan Jestin.

"Could we always use more money? Of course," Jestin said.

But, he added, council made a "sizeable investment" in bridges about seven years

ago and the city has "made steady progress" in improving their conditions since.

The proportion of bridges rated as "good" or "very good" was 60 per cent in 2010 and 61 per cent in 2011.

The same report found that, of 396 scheduled inspections in 2011, 312 were completed, which marked the highest number of incomplete inspections in six years that were included in the examination.

The lowest came in 2006 when there were just two incomplete inspections.

Jestin said Calgary has "a really robust inspection program" and Calgarians shouldn't worry about the state of city bridges.

"The June floods really highlight the greatest efforts we've put into making sure our structures are in very sound conditions," he said.

Elbow River bridges. City hires firm to oversee replacement

Residents are calling for pedestrian bridges due for a rebuild over the Elbow River to be more flood-resistant and offer better accessibility for users.

June's historic flood left spans at Rideau, Elbow Park and Sandy Beach ravaged and they were eventually torn down. On Wednesday, city of officials announced they've hired international engineering firm Delcan to design replacement structures.

A total of 870 Calgary residents responded to an online survey gathering input on what features should be included

in the spans. Seventy per cent said the bridges should be able to withstand future floods, 57 per cent said they should also be wider and more accessible to users and three quarters pleaded for the bridges to be completed as soon as possible.

Project manager Charmaine Buhler said her team's goal is to begin construction in the spring, but refrained from offering potential opening dates.

"We'll definitely take the (survey) responses into consideration . . . we're going to move as quickly as possible — it's not a typical project," she



A pedestrian bridge over the Elbow River is seen in shambles earlier this summer. METRO FILE

Delcan previously designed a pedestrian overpass for the city at Arbour Stone Rise and Stoney Trail that opened in 2010 and is working on a similar project at the Heritage LRT station. JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

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12-year-old girl. Medicine Hat man faces luring, child-porn charges

A southern Alberta man is facing luring and pornography charges after alleged contact with a 12-year-old girl.

Authorities say the man was charged after the girl's parents informed police in Florida about questionable emails.

Daniel Russell Rand of Medicine Hat is charged with two counts of child

luring, possession of child pornography and accessing child pornography.

Police allege that Rand, 41, sent inappropriate emails to the girl.

The St. Johns County sheriff's office in St. Augustine, Fla., made the arrest with the help of the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Team.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Warning

Carbon monoxide detectors save lives: Firefighters

The Calgary Fire Department issued a warning Wednesday over the deadly potential of carbon monoxide gas.

In 2012, firefighters responded to 1,884 calls involving the silent, colourless and tasteless

gas. Of those calls, 19 people needed medical help.

"Recently there has been an increase in carbon monoxide calls related to blocked fresh-air intakes and exhaust vents causing CO to build up in homes," said CFD spokeswoman Carol Henke.

"Fortunately, most people were alerted to the problem by their carbon monoxide alarm."

METRO

Calgary cops take lucky teens on a shopping spree



Const. Kevin Coursesne guides Raenna MacVicar through her shopping trip at the 8th annual CopShop. RILEY HILL/FOR METRO

CopShop. Program rewarding exceptional students aimed at building trust

To reward their hard work, 27 Calgary teens spent the morning at Marlborough Mall on a \$200 shopping spree with members of the Calgary Police Service.

As part of their annual CopShop program, the Calgary Police scoured nine junior high schools in the north and southeast for students who went above and beyond with their studies. At each school, three

Cozying up to cops

"We want to build bridges so they're confident to talk to a officer if they need one."

Officer Andrew Woodward

lucky students were selected to spend their cash with a city cop at their side.

Raenna MacVicar, a Grade 9 student from Ian Bazalgette junior high, has a love of science.

"I was picked because I help out other students a lot with their work in class, MacVicar said.

She carefully searched the shops with Calgary Police Service Const. Kevin Coursesne.

"This is my third year doing the CopShop program," Coursesne said. "It's one of the best days for a police officer. You get to see smiling people for once."

Community resource officer Andrew Woodward said events like this help build trust with the kids while they're still young.

"Kids might not want to talk to the police. They might even be frightened of them," Woodward said. "We want to build bridges so they're confident to talk to a officer if they need one." RILEY HILL/FOR METRO

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Crews dismantle the east-facing side of the Shaarey Tzedec Synagogue on Wednesday. A condo complex is slated to go up on the Mission property.

BRYAN WEISMILLER/METRO

Landmark synagogue to be demolished

'Sad day' Structure was city's largest synagogue when it opened, but its congregation left in '86

 **BRYAN WEISMILLER**
bryan.weismiller@metronews.ca

Childhood memories came back to Harry Sanders on Wednesday as he watched a backhoe demolish the Shaarey Tzedec Synagogue.

Sanders recalled holding his bar mitzvah at the inner-city Jewish sanctuary and how he stumbled over the concluding prayer.

"All these old men started yelling the next line," he said, with a chuckle. "It kind of throws you.... It was that kind of synagogue."

The brick-clad building in Mission is set to give way to a condo development.

Sanders conceded it was a "sad day" to watch the proverbial wrecking ball hit a sacred space.

The 17th Avenue S.E. site was the city's largest synagogue when it opened more than half a century ago and was linked to one of Calgary's

Beauty broken down

The Shaarey Tzedec Synagogue was cited for its "stunning and dynamic Modern-style architecture" in the city's Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources.

first Jewish organizations.

Kids used to skate on the site as well, prior to development.

"It was a landmark for the city of Calgary and a very beautiful building," Sanders said.

The building hasn't been used as a Jewish sanctuary since 1986, when its congregation moved out.

It's still listed on the city's Inventory of Historic Resources but can be demolished with the owner's consent.

Without a main tenant, Sanders said it was "inevitable" that the building's days were numbered.

A development permit was filed to the city in the fall of 2012. A small faction rallied to save the historic site shortly thereafter, but it appears that fell flat.

It was previously reported the sale went for \$4.2 million.

Lethal crash

Tragedy hits security company once more

One of two people killed on an icy highway in northern Alberta was an armoured-car guard.

A G4S armoured vehicle collided head-on with a pickup truck Tuesday on Highway 63 while on a routine trip between Edmonton and Fort McMurray.

The driver of the pickup

was also killed.

Katie McLeod, a spokeswoman with G4S in Toronto, said a second security guard inside the armoured vehicle was not seriously injured.

Counselling is being made available for co-workers at the company's Edmonton office, she said, adding it's the second time in two years they have been in mourning.

Three G4S guards were shot and killed by a fellow crew member in June 2012 as they were reloading ATM

machines at the University of Alberta. Another guard who was shot survived.

"To have both horrible instances occur within the same office is just doubly tragic," said McLeod.

She identified Rod Whalen, 60, as the employee who died in the crash. He had been with the company for more than 15 years, had three daughters and was engaged to be married.

McLeod said she was surprised someone riding inside

an armoured vehicle could have received fatal injuries. The vehicles are built like tanks, she said.

RCMP described the road as icy at the time of the crash.

Highway 63, the main link between Edmonton and the oilsands region, has become notorious for fatal crashes in recent years.

The provincial government is working to twin the highway in the hope of making it safer. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



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Hearing. Group reapply to oppose oilsands project

An environmental group has reapplied to speak to an oilsands review panel after a court tossed out the Alberta government's attempt to block the organization.

The Alberta Oilsands Environmental Coalition is asking the province for a chance to appear at a regulatory hearing into a project proposed by Southern Pacific Resource Corp. to expand an oilsands facility northwest of Fort McMurray.

"We oppose the project in its current form and are seeking the opportunity to voice our concerns at a hearing," the coalition said in a letter filed Wednesday.

The group was denied that opportunity when it first asked for it in 2012, even though it had routinely been granted standing at previous hearings.

An Alberta Environment bureaucrat ruled that the coalition hadn't demonstrated that its members would be directly affected by the development, a requirement that must be met to be granted standing at hearings.

Expansion

Southern Pacific wants to build a 12,000-barrel-a-day expansion of its McKay mine, about 45 kilometres northwest of Fort McMurray. The in-situ project, using steam injected underground to pump out bitumen, would employ 51 people and have a direct impact on 488 hectares of land.

ings held by the province's energy regulator.

The coalition decided to try to reverse the decision in the courts.

Queen's Bench Justice Richard Marceau concluded in October that the government doesn't have the right to bar groups from hearings for having differing opinions.

He went on to urge the province to seek broad input on oilsands developments to ensure the best decisions are made.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Edmonton. Plan for private medical lab encountering resistance

Opposition parties and a union are blasting the Alberta government's decision to seek proposals for a \$3-billion private medical superlab in Edmonton.

The plan calls for a corporation to build and run a state-of-the-art lab facility under a public-private partnership.

Liberals and New Democrats say privatizing such a key part of the health system will not benefit Albertans.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NDP health critic Dave Eggen says pathologists have raised concerns about how a private lab might affect patient safety and quality of care.

The Alberta Union of Provincial Employees also opposes the plan.

Alberta Health Services says it wants competitive bids before the end of March, and promises no workers will lose their jobs under the plan.



Const. Tom Page wants Calgarians to keep valuables hidden in their vehicles while holiday shopping this year. The CPS launched its Operation Christmas Presence on Wednesday to raise awareness among residents. RILEY HILL/FOR METRO

'Out of sight, out of mind'

Operation Christmas Presence. Snoopy thieves target items they can see in vehicles, so keep valuables hidden, police warn

RILEY HILL
calgary@metronews.ca

In one swift thrust, Calgary police Const. Tom Page smashed a car's window with the butt of a

By the numbers

Reported thefts from a vehicle in Calgary from Jan. 1 to Nov. 30 this year:

- 7,637 under \$5,000
- 112 over \$5,000

folding knife.

As a warning to shoppers, Calgary police launched Operation Christmas Presence on Wednesday afternoon to warn shoppers of potential holiday hooligans.

hooligans.

Page and several constables showed how easy it is to break into a vehicle by smashing the windows of several cars donated by the Alberta Motor Association (AMA).

To spare your car this fate, Page recommends hiding all possessions in your vehicle so they can't be seen through the windows.

"What we advocate is out of sight, out of mind," Page said.

"If you're out doing your Christmas shopping, please put your presents in the trunk or cover them up in the backseat."

According to Page, Calgary sees an increase in car break-ins during the holiday season.

"There's definitely more opportunity," Page said. "People are leaving more valuables in plain sight. It's just the nature of the beast for the Christmas shopping season."

AMA crime-prevention co-ordinator Wendy Mah sees this pattern repeat every year.

"All it takes is a couple extra seconds to make sure that you lock your door, secure the vehicle and remove or keep hidden all valuables," Mah said.

"It's that simple."

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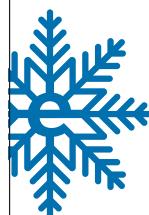
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Meat. FDA makes move to phase out use of some antibiotics in livestock

Citing a potential threat to public health, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is taking steps toward phasing out the use of some antibiotics in animals processed for meat.

The agency has announced that it will ask pharmaceutical companies to voluntarily stop labelling drugs important for treating human infection as acceptable for growth promotion in animals.

If the companies sign on — and one major company has already said it will

London

Two Damien Hirst artworks stolen

Two Damien Hirst artworks together valued at 33,000 pounds (\$57,000) have been stolen from a London art gallery, police said Wednesday.

The Metropolitan Police

Protecting humans

The FDA move is designed to limit antibiotic-resistant diseases in humans. Repeated exposure to antibiotics can lead germs to become resistant to the drug so that it's no longer effective.

— using those antibiotics to promote growth in animals would be illegal.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

said the two signed prints, Pyronin Y and Oleoylsarcosin, were taken from the Exhibitionist Gallery in west London in the early hours of Monday by a thief who forced the gallery doors. The works are among Hirst's series of Spot pieces, covered in multicoloured dots.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FDA denies approval for female sexual-desire drug

Flibanserin. Daily pill is designed to increase libido in women by acting on brain chemicals linked to mood and appetite

The multi-decade search for a pill that boosts sexual desire in women has hit another road-block, raising questions about the future of efforts to develop a female equivalent to Viagra.

Sprout Pharmaceuticals said Wednesday it has reached an impasse with the Food and Drug Administration over its drug, flibanserin. The pill is designed to increase libido in women by acting on brain chemicals.

The FDA questions whether the drug's benefits outweigh its risks, considering its "modest" effectiveness and side effects including fatigue and nausea.

Sprout said it is appealing



Cindy Whitehead holds a tablet of flibanserin in her office at Sprout Pharmaceuticals in Raleigh, N.C.
ALLEN G. BREED/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

an October letter from the FDA that denied approval and asked for more information. But chances for approval appear slim: Of the 17 appeals FDA considered last year, 14 were denied, according to government figures.

The agency's latest rejection raises serious questions

for more than a half-dozen companies working to develop therapies for women who report stress due to lack of libido. It's a market drug makers have been trying to tap since the blockbuster success of Viagra, an erectile-dysfunction drug.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"A pill just doesn't take care of it."

Dr. Virginia Sadock, psychiatrist, on the difficulties of treating female sexual dysfunction.



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Vancouver proposes sending gay councillor to rep city in Sochi

Winter Olympics.

Councillor says cities vying to host Olympics should create 'pride houses'

Vancouver, the host city that introduced the "Pride House" to the Olympics movement, could soon send its gay deputy mayor to Russia to fight against homophobia in sport.

City councillors are expected to endorse a resolution next week sending Coun. Tim Stevenson and two members of his Host City Pride House Mission Team to the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.

Once there, the team will ask officials with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Paralympic Committee to include a non-discrimination clause for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-



Openly gay Vancouver city councillor and deputy mayor Tim Stevenson speaks to reporters after it was announced Wednesday that he may represent the city at the 2014 Sochi Olympics. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

gendered people in the Games' charter and require future host cities to endorse pride houses in their bids.

The trip would come about eight months after Russia passed a law that bans "propaganda of non-traditional sexual

relations" and imposes fines on people who stage gay pride rallies.

"This isn't to challenge laws

or to challenge the authorities," Stevenson told reporters in Vancouver Wednesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pride House

What he hopes to do

"I am going to try to convince the IOC that they need to change.

"This isn't about trying to raise international incidents, and there will probably be others that may do that, I don't know, but good luck to them. But I want to go to make sure that we speak to the IOC and get them to understand how important it is to include sexual orientation in their charter and how important it is to have a safe house in every Olympics from here on in."

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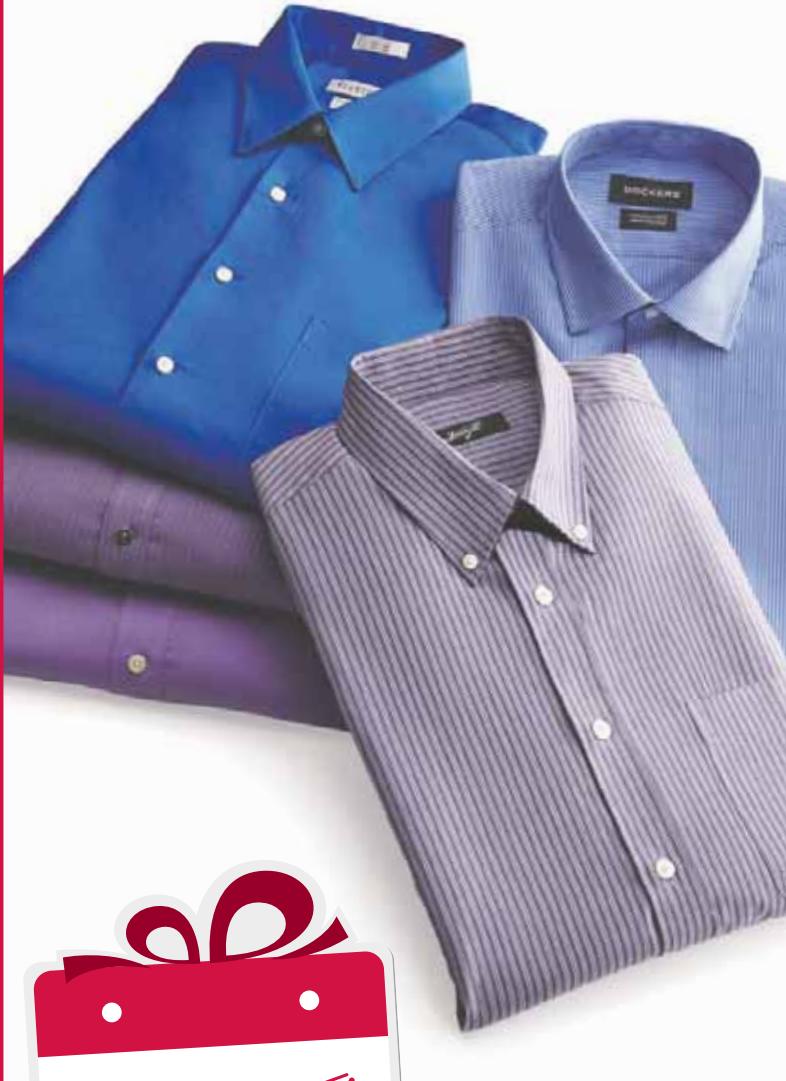
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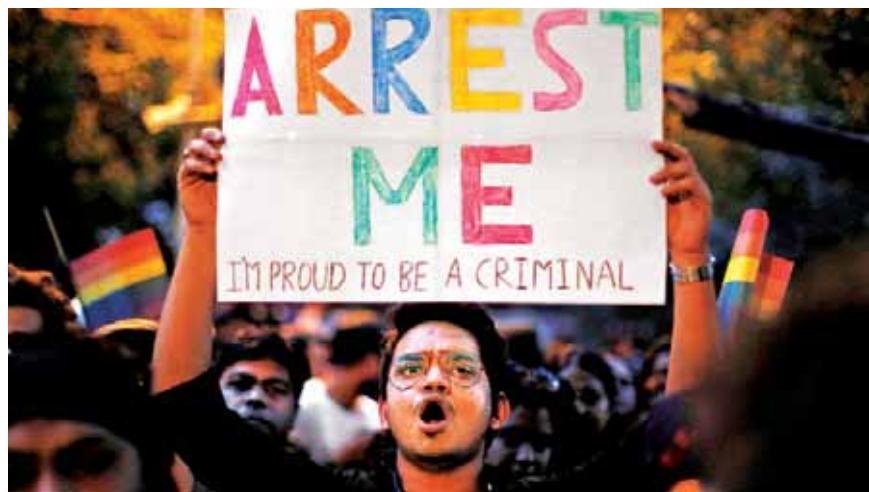
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Thursday, December 12, 2013



An Indian gay-rights activist holds up a placard during a protest Wednesday in New Delhi. The Supreme Court threw out a 2009 High Court decision to decriminalize homosexuality, dealing a blow to gay activists who have argued for years for the chance to live openly in India's deeply conservative society. **ALTAF QADRI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

India's top court recriminalizes homosexuality

1860s law. Country among 70 others that criminalize homosexual conduct, according to human-rights groups

India's Supreme Court struck down a 2009 lower-court decision to decriminalize homosexual conduct, dealing a blow Wednesday to gay activists who have fought for years for the chance to live openly in India's deeply conservative society.

The judges said only lawmakers and not the courts could change a colonial-era

Encourages 'discrimination'

"We cannot be forced back into the closet. We are not backing off from our fight against discrimination."

Gautam Bhan, an activist who had petitioned the court

law that bans homosexual acts and makes them punishable by up to a decade in prison.

The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community across India reacted to the surprise decision with defiance.

After the ruling, dozens of activists outside the court began crying and hugging

each other in consolation.

"This is a very sad day for us, we are back to square one in our fight for the democratic rights of the gay community," said Ashok Row Kavi of the activist group Humsafar Trust.

Lawyers and supporters of gays, lesbians and transsexuals vowed to continue pressing for the removal of the law, which they say encourages discrimination, even if it is rarely invoked by prosecutors.

"We feel very let down," said lawyer Anand Grover, who had argued the case on behalf of the advocacy group NAZ Foundation. "But our fight is not over and we will continue to fight for the constitutional right."

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Mandela memorial interpreter a fraud



U.S. President Barack Obama stands next to a fake sign-language interpreter as he makes his speech at the memorial service for Nelson Mandela at the FNB Stadium in Soweto near Johannesburg on Tuesday. MATT DUNHAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Say what? Advocates for the deaf say sign-language interpreter was a faker who just waved his arms around meaninglessly

As one world leader after another took the stage in a gigantic soccer stadium to pay homage to Nelson Mandela in Soweto, South Africa, the man at arm's reach from them appeared to be interpreting for the deaf at the hours-long memorial.

The unidentified man, who stood about one metre from U.S. President Barack Obama and other leaders, "was moving his hands around but there was no meaning in what he used his hands for," Bruno Druchen, the Deaf Federation of South Africa's national director, said.

When South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa told the crowd that former South African President F.W. de Klerk was among the guests in a VIP section, the man at his side used a strange pushing motion

unknown in sign language that did not identify de Klerk or say anything about his presence in the stadium, said Ingrid Parkin, principal of the St. Vincent School for the Deaf in Johannesburg.

The closest the man's gestures at that point came to anything in sign language might possibly be the words for "running horse," "friend" or "beyond," she said, but only by someone who signs terribly. The man also used virtually no facial expressions to convey the often emotional speeches of the leader, an absolute must for sign language interpreters, Parkin said.

Collins Chabane, one of South Africa's two presidency ministers, told reporters the government is investigating "alleged incorrect use of sign language at the National Memorial Service" and did not identify the man but added the "government will report publicly on any information it may establish."

Outraged deaf people and sign language interpreters from Canada to China have complained about the man, Parkin

said. "This man himself knows he cannot sign and he had the guts to stand on an international stage and do that," Parkin said. "It's absolutely impossible that he is any kind of interpreter. Or a language person at all, because he's not even using a language there."

The allegation of the use of a bogus sign interpreter was yet another example of bad organization at the service Tuesday. Other problems included breakdowns in public transportation that hindered mourners from getting to the soccer stadium and a faulty audio system that made the remarks of world leaders inaudible for many. Police also failed to search the first wave of crowds who rushed inside the stadium after authorities opened the gates just after dawn. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Repeat offender

The man also did sign interpretation at an event last year that was attended by South African President Jacob Zuma.

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Ottawa. Suspended senator denied press pass on Parliament Hill

The parliamentary press gallery in Ottawa has denied suspended senator Patrick Brazeau's bid for accreditation as a freelance reporter for Halifax-based Frank Magazine.

Press gallery president and Radio-Canada reporter Daniel Thibeault said that Brazeau wasn't eligible for membership because he's still a senator.

"So we feel as an executive that it's incompatible. You can't be a senator and a member of the press gallery at the same time," Thibeault said.

The Halifax edition of Frank — not to be confused with another publication in Ottawa with the same name — caused a stir this month by announcing Brazeau would become its newest contributor.

The satire and gossip magazine said the senator would be a "pain in the arse" to his former Senate colleagues, who voted to suspend Brazeau and fellow ex-Conservative caucus members over their questionable expense claims.



Suspended senator Patrick Brazeau
SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

California

Man running 'revenge porn' site charged with extortion

Kevin Christopher Bollaert, 27, was arrested by California Department of Justice agents on 31 felony counts of conspiracy, identity theft and extortion.

Bollaert created the "revenge porn" website ugotposted.com a year ago, according to court documents. The site let users anonymously post more than 10,000 nude and explicit photographs of others without their permission.

Unlike other such sites, ugotposted.com required that the victim be identified by name, age and other information, leading to the identity theft allegations.

Documents say Bollaert charged victims a fee ranging from \$249.99 to \$350 to remove the images, using emails sent through a second website, changemyreputation.com.

Both websites were inactive as of Tuesday.

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Missing heart. Marine's parents seeking damages after accidental discovery

The parents of a U.S. Marine whose body came back from Greece missing his heart have amended their federal lawsuit to add the Greek government and an Athens hospital as defendants.

Craig and Beverly LaLoup are also suing the U.S. Department of Defence over the remains of 21-year-old Sgt. Brian LaLoup. The Defence Department doesn't comment on pending litigation. Messages were left with the Greek government and state-run Evangelismos General Hospital.

LaLoup, who was assigned to a security detail at the em-

bassy, had told a colleague he was suicidal over a breakup. The parents believe a Marine supervisor knew about his mindset but instead of getting help, took him out for drinks.

Their lawsuit alleges their son was allowed to get a weapon from a storage area later that night, despite his mood and level of intoxication, and shot himself. The U.S. government is generally immune from wrongful death lawsuits, so the family is seeking damages only over their emotional distress caused by the missing heart.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Surrendered

Defection setback for Uganda's LRA

The Lord's Resistance Army led by Joseph Kony has suffered its biggest defection in years after 19 members

surrendered to an advocacy group and African Union troops hunting the insurgents in the Central African Republic, the advocacy group said. Invisible Children said in a statement the LRA members gave themselves up on Dec. 6.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Frustrated Chinese citizens drink pesticide in protest

Homes demolished.
Residents say they'd had enough after years of fruitless petitioning

A dozen residents of a central Chinese city protested the demolition of their homes by drinking pesticide in Beijing in a desperate bid for attention that underscores the failures of a decades-old petitioning system.

The 12 survived the protest Tuesday near a historic watchtower in the heart of China's capital after police sent them to a hospital, where they were being treated Wednesday for poisoning, said Wang Yuping, one of the residents.

Chinese petitioners sometimes are driven to extreme measures as their frustration boils over after years of unresolved grievances and routine beatings by local authorities.



Chinese residents from Wuhan province lie on the ground after drinking pesticide near a historic watchtower in the heart of Beijing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wang, 40, and the others had travelled to Beijing from a district in Wuhan, the provincial capital of Hubei province, to draw attention to their complaints.

Wang described the protest as a group suicide attempt.

"We have been petitioning for so many years, but either we have been dragged back home or locked in secret jails and beaten, and no one has been willing to help us," Wang said by telephone. "We felt like there was no hope left."

Each petitioner drank about 50 millilitres of pesticide, Wang said, then lay down on the ground until police bundled them into vehicles and drove them to a hospital.

Wang said the petitioners have been unsuccessfully seeking redress since 2010 for the razing of their homes by local authorities who provided little or no compensation.

Local government and police offices in Wuhan could not be reached by phone. Every year in China, millions of complaints are filed about what petitioners see as injustice or incompetence by local officials. The system is criticized as ineffective and being prone to abuse. Petitioners are often met with violence when they attempt to take their cases to Beijing, with local governments sending "interceptors" to stop them — with force — and keep them in informal "black jails" until they can be sent home.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Meteor shower ramps up

In this Dec. 13, 2012, file photo, a meteor streaks across the sky during the annual Geminid meteor shower over Springville, Ala. The annual Geminid meteor shower — the most intense of the year — will peak Friday night. But the best viewing may be early Saturday, once the moon sets. **MARK ALMOND/AL.COM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Ottawa

Man faces human-trafficking charges

Police in Ottawa say a 31-year-old man is facing six charges related to human trafficking and prostitution.

Police say the charges came after officers re-

sponded Monday to a complaint of suspicious activity at a home (on Greenview Avenue). Zhao Liu of Ottawa faces charges that include human trafficking, living on the avails of prostitution, and keeping a common bawdy house. Police say the alleged victims were over 18 years old. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Data collection.

Churnin says she's not opposed to the census but doesn't want a U.S. company involved

A 79-year-old woman on trial for refusing to fill out the mandatory census in 2011 stood staunchly by her decision Wednesday, as her lawyer suggested the government didn't do enough to address her concerns about a U.S. arms maker's role in the data collection process.

The Crown, however, argued that Canadians cannot refuse to comply with legitimate government obligations simply on the basis of moral disapproval or speculative security fears.

Janet Churnin has been charged with violating the

Statistics Act and, if convicted, could face a \$500 fine and/or three months in jail.

"Whatever happens will happen," the soft-spoken senior said with a shrug outside a Toronto court. "I still wouldn't change anything."

At the heart of Churnin's worries lies defence company Lockheed Martin's involvement in the census process, which she learned about only after reading a newspaper article flagged by a friend in 2011.

Statistics Canada has said the government contracted Lockheed Martin to provide software for its census operations in 2003, and used the custom-built systems for both the 2006 and 2011 census.

Churnin worried information on Canada's population was at risk because she thought it could be accessed by Lockheed Martin, or even the U.S. government if it



Janet Churnin, left, stands outside a Toronto courthouse with Audrey Tobias on Wednesday. Both women refused to fill out the mandatory census in 2011 and were taken to trial. DIANA MEHTA/THE CANADIAN PRESS

made the corporation turn over the data under its Patriot Act.

"Your privacy is not considered at all," she told court when explaining her decision

to refrain from filling out the census form.

Simply not filling out the census form, she said, was the most direct form of protest. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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Elements of instability

Recent discord denotes a country divided

Yanukovych's shelving in November of an agreement with the European Union to deepen economic and political ties has set off weeks of protests.

Supporters of the EU pact — including many in Kyiv, the capital — want Ukraine to become closer to Western Europe and distance itself from Russia, which ruled or dominated Ukraine for centuries.

Russia has worked hard to derail the accord, issuing a variety of trade threats, and Ukrainians in the east look more favourably on aligning closer with Russia.

Yanukovych, who is seeking a bailout loan from the International Monetary Fund to keep Ukraine from going bankrupt, is sensitive to the economic disruption that trade disputes with Russia can cause.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine opposition shuns offer of talks

Act before chat.

Withdrawal of riot police interpreted as sign that support for president is dwindling

Opposition leaders in Ukraine rejected President Viktor Yanukovych's offer of talks Wednesday, saying they will not sit down with him until he fires his government and releases all arrested demonstrators.

That stance reflected their growing confidence after the abrupt withdrawal of riot police from parts of Ukraine's capital early Wednesday raised protesters' hopes that weeks of demonstrations have eroded police support for Yanukovych and his government.

Yanukovych issued an invitation late in the day to

Not ready to make nice

"Instead of a round table, what we got is a breakup (with) truncheons. The authorities are driving into a dead end."

Oleksandr Turchynov
Opposition leader

political, religious and civil figures to join a national dialogue. But it gave no details about a proposed date for the talks — and could have been merely an attempt to buy time and mollify Western officials.

The opposition reaction was scathing.

"Instead of a round table, what we got is a breakup (with) truncheons. The authorities are driving into a dead end," opposition leader Oleksandr Turchynov said.

Yuri Lutsenko, a former interior minister who is now another opposition leader, said

troubled nation of 46 million.

In response, Prime Minister Mykola Azarov and other officials promised Wednesday that police would not act against peaceful protesters.

"I want to calm everyone down — there will be no dispersal of protesters," Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko said in a statement, which did not explain why thousands of helmeted and shield-bearing police were deployed in the first place.

Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Victoria Nuland met with Yanukovych Wednesday after visiting the protest camp.

"I made it absolutely clear that what happened last night, what is happening in security terms here, is absolutely impermissible in a European state, a democratic state," she said, referring to police scuffles with protesters.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Pro-European Union activists wave flags as riot

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police pull back from Independence Square in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Wednesday. SERGEI GRITS / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Overnight uproar. Police move on demonstrators

The flurry of police action in Kyiv began about 1 a.m., when phalanxes approached Independence Square from several directions, tearing down some tents and barricades and scuffling with some protesters. Many protesters, wearing orange construction hats to protect themselves from police truncheons, locked arms against the police and some scuffles broke out.

Separately, three buses of riot police parked on the

steps of the city administration building, about 300 metres away from the square. Protesters poured water on the steps, which quickly froze, and grappled with police.

The police returned to the buses and pulled away hours later, as protesters shouted "Shame!" and "Way to go!" The larger police contingent at the square also left and by Wednesday afternoon, new tents and barricades were being put up. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**



A Ukrainian woman, a pro-European Union activist, sits during the protest in Independence Square on Wednesday.

SERGEI CHUZAVKOV / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Facts of the fight

- The protests are the biggest since Ukraine's pro-democracy Orange Revolution in 2004, which forced the annulment of Yanukovych's presidential victory in a fraud-tainted election and ushered his pro-Western opponents into power.

- Yanukovych won back the presidency in the 2010 vote, narrowly defeating Yulia Tymoshenko, a key Orange Revolution figure. Tymoshenko was then imprisoned on charges of abuse of office, a case widely criticized in the West as political revenge.

- In Washington, the State Department said it is evaluating all options, including possible U.S. sanctions against Ukraine. It didn't provide details, but in the past the U.S. has imposed asset freezes and travel bans on senior officials in oppressive governments.

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Craig Kielburger leaves condolences for Nelson Mandela in South Africa.
COURTESY MICHAEL RAJZMAN

Let's start with your response to the massive memorial service you attended for Nelson Mandela.

The emotions that are running through me — I'd say one is gratitude for the role that he played as one of the great leaders in our world for human rights ... but also, I have a sense of responsibility and I hope everyone does feel a sense of responsibility, that the world was fortunate to see

CRAIG KIELBURGER

As the world mourns Nelson Mandela, one of Canada's preeminent youth leaders, and co-founder of Free The Children, spoke with Metro Tuesday from Johannesburg after attending Mandela's memorial.

"A SENSE OF JUST PROFOUND GRATITUDE."

someone like Mandela and now the question is, what will we do to live that legacy ... I'd say it's very much a sense of just profound gratitude.

How has Nelson Mandela helped shape Free The Children?

I had the pleasure to hear him speak in various capacities ... and once, very briefly meeting him, as did my brother — to ask him a question about his leadership philosophy ... he reflected on how he was as a young person, a shepherd or herder, and he learned

a lesson that forever stayed with him ... that you always had to stand in the back to make sure your sheep, or your goats, always got to where they were supposed to go — that they didn't wander off to the side ... that simple idea, the lessons that he taught — the humanity — is an amazing influence.

What was Mandela's impact on you?
Inspiring, I don't think there's any other word that one can use ... inspiring in what he represented, inspiring in how he carried himself, inspiring

in his words — but mostly inspiring in his dreams ... That to lead, you must walk from behind and I think that speaks to the essence of who he was. A leader through-and-through, but someone who was so dedicated to making sure the most vulnerable always arrived.

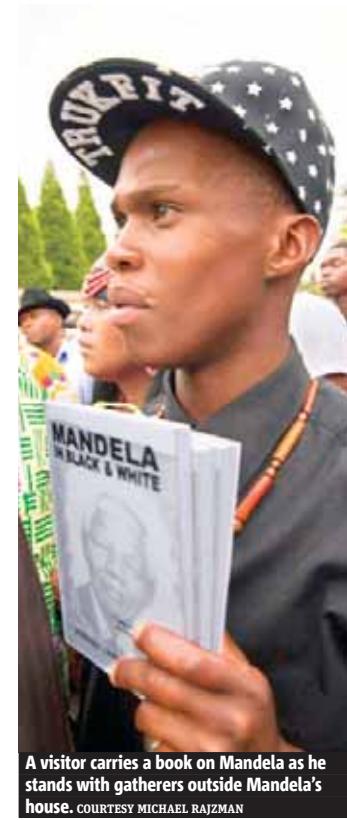
How important is it that leaders are encouraging the world to model themselves after Mandela?

I hope that more world leaders would model themselves on Mandela. I think it's very easy to quote him, it's very difficult to model him ... if world leaders want to honour Mandela ... they can increase their foreign-aid commitments, they can promote service and volunteerism in their country, they can show that same compassion and forgiveness with some of the great intractable conflicts of our world — that would be a great way to honour Mandela.

What legacy do you think Mandela will leave behind?

I think legacy isn't something that he writes. In his time on this earth, he inspired us with his courage and his humanity and his willingness to forgive and his legacy will, ironically, be something we write ... the legacy is in our hands and I think we have an opportunity that we should not waste.

MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO IN SASKATOON



A visitor carries a book on Mandela as he stands with gatherers outside Mandela's house. COURTESY MICHAEL RAJZMAN

Dispatches from South Africa by Craig Kielburger

1 Arrival. With a heavy heart

On Wednesday, I walked into the courtyard of the Union Buildings in Pretoria where, in 1994, Nelson Mandela was sworn in as the first democratically elected president of South Africa. I headed up a flight of stairs and stopped. It felt as though there was pressure on my chest, heaviness in my heart. I took a deep breath. I expected to see a closed casket and hadn't prepared to see his body. People are lining up for up to seven hours to pay their respects. Of course.

2 Tribute. A sense of gratitude

I'm struck how a nation can come together for such an overwhelming tribute to Mandela, patriarch of this lush country once fractured by racism and hatred. These tributes extend beyond borders. I can't imagine another living person today, or in my lifetime, that could have such a unifying effect. Standing waist-deep in flowers left outside Mandela's house, sharing stories with his friends at a service, standing with South Africans to visit, I feel gratitude.

3 Pride. A never-dying spirit

"For the spirit of Nelson Mandela, it was the right time for him to go because he had done everything humanly possible to change this country. His was a never-dying spirit that showed us anybody can become anything." — Sammy Ntimanem, 34, in the Union Buildings in Pretoria

4 Hope. More than just a moment

"We have been friends and co-workers for eight years. We are very patriotic and support every event we can, from political, to sports, to moments like this. But this is more than just a moment. We came to the square to give tribute to the greatest man on Earth," said Esther Rubin, with Lilahloane Mokale in Nelson Mandela Square, Johannesburg. Added Mokale: "We love him so very much ... What we have is because of him. I hope we can go on without him."

5 Remember. For the next generation

"I so want my daughter to remember this day. That's why I have her here. As she grows up I will keep telling her stories about apartheid and how it was before in this country." — Monica Ntimana, 29, with Grace, five months



Work continues

100

At Free the Children, we are adding our voice to the tributes to Mandela. Our organization, along with Canadian schoolchildren, is building 100 schools in Africa. Mandela once said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

PHOTOS COURTESY MICHAEL RAJZMAN

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Five-stage plan.

In a bid to save up to \$900M a year, Canada Post will phase out door-to-door service

Canada Post is making dramatic changes to its mail services beginning next year, part of a new plan that will see door-to-door delivery phased out and postage stamp prices soar.

While some community organizations are rattled and the postal union is rallying to protect thousands of jobs, the news may barely interrupt the tweets and texts of most Canadians.

Rapid technology changes have reduced Canadians' reliance on the postal service, making the traditional daily check for the letter drop almost unnecessary in 2013. Bill payments are made online, couriers deliver parcels and, at this



The familiar sight of a Canada Post employee delivering mail door-to-door will become a distant memory as Canada Post phases out the service within the next five years. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

time of year, email inboxes are more likely than mailboxes to be overflowing with Christmas greetings.

The financial situation for Canada Post has been bad for

years as the Crown corporation tried to maintain a profitable business processing fewer letters, even as the number of Canadian addresses grows by about 200,000 locations each

year.

In 2012, only about one-third of Canadians, or nearly 5.1 million people, received mail delivery to their door, costing an average of \$283 per year

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A loonie per stamp?

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Canada Post also plans to increase the price of a stamp to 85 cents when purchased in a booklet, starting on March 31. Stamps purchased individually will cost \$1 each.

for each address, according to the Canada Post annual report.

The rest of Canadians either visited a central location, like an apartment lobby, community mailbox, rural mailbox or delivery facility, which cost the corporation significantly less.

On Wednesday, Canada Post unveiled a five-stage plan that will help save up to \$900 million a year. The federal Crown corporation plans to phase out home delivery within the next five years by replacing delivery on foot with community mail boxes, raise postal rates and cut thousands of jobs.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Overused words

**On LinkedIn?
Nix 'responsible'
from your profile**

Responsible is the No. 1 most overused buzzword on LinkedIn profiles in Canada, and globally, in 2013.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

**@Pontifex.
Pope named
the Person
of the Year**

Time magazine selected Pope Francis as its Person of the Year on Wednesday, saying the Catholic Church's new leader has changed the perception of the 2,000-year-old institution in an extraordinary way in a short time.

The Pope beat out NSA leaker Edward Snowden for the distinction, which the newsmagazine has been giving each year since 1927.

He has denounced the world's "idolatry of money" and the "global scandal" that nearly 1 billion people today go hungry, and has charmed the masses with his simple style and wry sense of humour. His appearances draw tens of thousands of people and his @Pontifex Twitter account recently topped 10 million followers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Time magazine named Pope Francis its Person of the Year.

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IT'S CHILLY – NOT THE TASTY TYPE

Lo and be cold, it's that time of year again in Canada.

When I watch the morning forecast, some of the temperatures are best measured in Kelvin: "It will be Absolute Zero in Regina, but with the wind chill it will feel like we've passed beyond our understanding of thermodynamics, so bundle up!"

As I walk to work, my palm burns from my morning coffee but the back of my hand freezes from the coffee dripping. (In all things, moderation.)

And at work, I waste my time with YouTube videos illustrating that household pets, if tossed into the frigid air, will disintegrate into snow before they hit the ground.

N-n-n-not to put too f-f-f-fine a point on it, but it's c-c-c-cold.

It's all relative, of course — an Edmontonian accustomed to -25 C might hallucinate in the balmy -8 C of Toronto and imagine oases in the distance, frozen solid and covered in sexy skaters. Yet



HE SAYS
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

a friend of mine who's moved to Toronto from Vancouver was lost when she was told T.O. gets "twice as cold" as it is now.

"I don't even know what that means," she said, like somebody who'd been told they'll be murdered on Tuesday and again on Thursday.

My point being, it's best we set aside our regional differences and accept that the whole nation is a frigid wasteland — No Country for Cold Men.

Beer commercials to the contrary, most Canadian adults cower inside all winter. And when youth do go outside it results in all manner of deformities: Swollen ears and tongues stuck to metal and faces frozen solid. I once froze up so badly while waiting for a school bus that even when laughing I couldn't smile, leaving all my

classmates in hysterics and providing an early cautionary tale about the dangers of Botox.

With these extreme dangers frozen in our minds, here are seven tips for any extreme-cold emergencies this winter:

1) Your home and car should have an emergency kit that includes: Warm water; Super Inferno Cinnamon Gum; one pack of erotic playing cards; a watch that runs on the cold; marshmallows; a magic hat for snowman sentience creation; plane tickets to some place warmer.

2) When lighting that furniture-fuelled bonfire in your living room, only use clean-burning natural gas.

3) Leaving your car running all winter will make those morning commutes comfy while speeding up global warming.

4) Soak wool in warm water before heading out.

5) To keep your kids warm, put all of them in the same adult-sized snowsuit and have them walk in tandem, imitating a full-sized person. Cartoon capering is also great exercise.

6) Remember to swing open your door every 10 minutes or so to see if it's gotten any warmer outside.

7) Find out what Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi's doing. He's got this.

And those are my tips. Careful you don't freeze them right off. A friendly reminder: While I've made light of the chill, hypothermia and frostbite are no laughing matter. Or maybe they are. It's so hard to tell with our faces frozen like this.

Clickbait

 LUKE SIMCOE
Metro Online



CONTRIBUTED

The digital equivalent of a rotoscope, animated GIFs are one of the oldest image formats used on the web. Invented in the 1980s, the humble GIF has since become a staple of online culture. Easy to make and even easier to share, they're the perfect platform for everything from humour to art. Most image-editing programs can make GIFs, but here are a few apps that simplify the process. Happy GIFing! Just don't get me started on how it's pronounced.

GifBoom:

Available on both Android and iOS, GifBoom is considered the Instagram of mobile GIF-making apps. The social features are largely optional, but the built-in GIF-maker is intuitive and lets you do things like add filters or sound.

Cinemagram:

Another cross-platform smartphone app, Cinemagram veers towards creating GIFs out of video footage. The app's appeal lies in its masking function, which allows you to select which parts of a frame are animated.

ImgFlip:

If you want to be old fashioned and make GIFs in your web browser, ImgFlip is one of the more full-featured sites. It lets you build GIFs out of either video or pictures, and includes a decent suite of editing tools.

Twitter



@willems_steph: Frozen food delivery receptacle.

@metropicks asked: The home mailbox will be obsolete as @canadapostcorp ends urban delivery. What's the best way to repurpose a mailbox?

@draxapup: flower pot on every front stoop

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ZOOM

War, from a kid's perspective



COURTESY BRIAN MCCARTY

Photographer captures a feeling

This shot of toy missiles heading for a doll's house isn't meant for playtime — it's how a child sees war. The striking image by Hollywood photographer Brian McCarty features in his War-Toys project, which explores how conflict is perceived through the eyes of kids caught up in war and violence across the Middle East. METRO

Toys make sense of it all



BRIAN MCCARTY
Photographer/artist,
39, based in West Hollywood, Calif.

What's your project about?
Starting back in 2011, I travelled to Israel and the Palestinian Territories to

explore war from the perspective of children. I visited humanitarian organizations where children were invited to draw pictures about their lives. The resulting illustrations served as the basis for my photographs.

Why did you use toys?
As children, toys became surrogates through which we acted out aspects of the

world around us. Our play allowed us to organically deconstruct what it meant to be human and digest large concepts in smaller bites. War is so dehumanizing and outside normal reality that, even as adults, we need toys to make sense of it. We need the distance provided by these plastic totems to begin seeing the actual horrors without being made numb.



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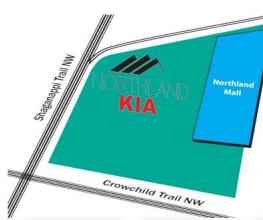


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The Power to Surprise

Winter flicks to help pass the time inside

Even when the winter chill forces you indoors, there's still a way to enjoy the frosty weather. Plenty of snowy flicks abound to either celebrate the icy romance of an all-white landscape, or bemoan the cold, stark isolation that comes with darker days.

On the days you just can't bear the outdoors, trade that blanket of snow for a cosy cover on the couch and settle in with one of these winter-set classics. Here's a look at five snow-bound flicks to keep you toasty by the tube.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Fargo

Writers-directors Joel and Ethan Coen capture all the beauty and harshness of a frigid winter season with this brutal 1996 crime thriller. It's full of striking images that linger long after the final credits, many of them featuring a barren northern landscape instantly recognizable to most Canadians. Who hasn't had a near-mental breakdown while scraping ice off a frozen windshield? Star William H. Macy is pitch perfect as bumbling car salesman Jerry Lundegaard, who hatches a brazen kidnapping that goes horribly awry.



Into the Wild

The unforgiving elements of winter feature prominently in this 2007 adventure tale about a young wanderer, played by Emile Hirsch, who sets his sights on a solo excursion to Alaska after graduating from university. His foolhardy odyssey takes him across the continent in search of enlightenment and solitude, and he meets a range of friendly eccentrics along the way. But a cold hard truth awaits this idealistic loner, and his anguished journey — based on real events — is hard to shake.



The Shining

Chills abound in this 1980 horror classic about a young family that is hired to look after a creepy old hotel that is shuttered for the slow winter months. Cabin fever predictably sets in for the crazy-eyed dad, played with unforgettable zeal by Jack Nicholson, and that's just when the hotel starts to reveal it may have a cold, dark past. The weirdness mounts as the snow falls, culminating in a memorable blizzard chase scene and one character's icy demise.



Cold Mountain

It's pretty cold up on Cold Mountain, and we're reminded of that constantly in this 2003 period drama about a Civil War soldier, played by Jude Law, who trudges through a harsh landscape to return to his faithful sweetheart Ada, played by Nicole Kidman. This is a good old-fashioned love story also starring Renée Zellweger, where the burning ardour of separated lovers sustain them through a barrage of hardships that continually work to keep them apart.



The Empire Strikes Back

OK, this kid-friendly classic makes the list largely due to that disgusting blizzard scene where Han Solo cuts open the belly of a passed out tauntaun and stuffs a delirious Luke Skywalker inside to keep him from freezing to death. But of course, that's not Han's only brush with deadly cold in this beloved 1980 Star Wars instalment, there's another chilly scene that's spawned all sorts of quirky merchandise including Han-shaped ice cube trays and Han-shaped chocolate bars.

SCENE

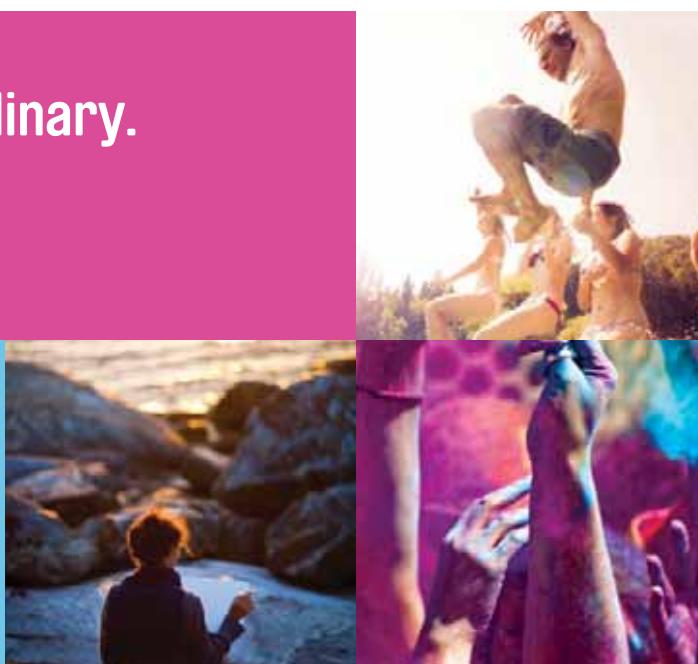
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NBC's halls alive with the sound of potential

A one-hit wonder?

The Sound of Music' was a smash last week, but what will NBC do for a musical encore?

NBC's halls are alive with the sound of sequels. After the triumph of last week's The Sound of Music Live! NBC understandably is now planning more live musicals.

This is welcome news for anyone who likes seeing a network get off the beaten path. Few observers have failed to cheer NBC for raw ambition in presenting a live musical more than a half-century after the previous one aired. Attaboys even came from the loudest critics of the broadcast and its leading lady, Carrie Underwood, who played Maria.

"I think we can do this again — and again and again," NBC Entertainment Chairman Robert Greenblatt told The New York Times this week, while allowing, "There may be a little bit of a phenomenon to the

first one of these. Who knows what happens Year 2, 3 or 4?"

Who indeed? Can the interest, excitement and nearly 19 million viewers scored by The Sound of Music Live! be matched a year from now by another such TV event? Or was this live show a one-note wonder? The answer might lie in determining why so many viewers tuned in.

Was it Carrie Underwood who served as the big draw?

Was the main attraction The Sound of Music itself, a Rodgers and Hammerstein classic that, largely thanks to its 1965 film version, is one of the most recognized and popular family entertainments in the world?

Or did the audience simply rally to the anything-could-happen unpredictability of live TV, something no viewer had experienced with a musical since Eisenhower was president?

Odds are, all three reasons help explain why The Sound of Music Live! made such a splash. But a year from now, can NBC's follow-up strike a similar chord? What manner of star could equal Underwood's drawing power? And, maybe



Carrie Underwood, right as Maria, in The Sound of Music Live! AP PHOTO

most important of all, is there any other musical that could grab the attention The Sound of Music automatically claims?

Although NBC isn't saying which musicals may be under consideration, it's easy enough to play a guessing game.

Maybe Peter Pan or The Music Man (though both have

been revived as filmed TV productions). Perhaps mega-star Hugh Jackman could reprise his triumphant performance in a TV revival of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!

What about Mame with Cher? Bette Midler in Hello Dolly? Reba McEntire in The Unsinkable Molly Brown?

But do any of these projects come close to The Sound of Music Live? In short, is there another filmed musical everyone has seen and has such deep feelings for? Of course. It's time for NBC's star-studded staging of The Wizard of Oz Live!

Sign Lea Michele of Glee to play Dorothy, Meryl Streep as the Good Witch, Anne Hathaway as the Wicked Witch. Tina Fey as the Wizard. Neil Patrick Harris as the Scarecrow. Alan Cumming as the Tin Man. Will Ferrell as the Cowardly Lion.

The Wizard of Oz, with Judy Garland as Dorothy, reigns as a piece of pop culture that viewers would be thrilled or outraged — but most important, compelled — to see restaged for live TV. They would watch with bated breath for technical screw-ups (beware that flying house and melting witch!). They would scour the Twitterverse with comments, flattering and snarky. Before, during and after it aired, this show and its songs would be on everyone's lips. A year from now, the yellow brick road could prove to be a straight shot to Must-See TV. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Following their movie

One Direction reality show may well be ... a reality

One Direction are probably getting their own reality show. Cue the shrieks of teen girls, weird middle-aged women and some teen boys everywhere. The insanely popular British boy band (the rabid tween girl fan frenzy they inspire has not been seen since boy band dinosaurs Backstreet Boys et al roamed the earth) already made a movie — This is Us — so a reality show is the natural next step (There is nothing natural about reality shows). Details about the yet-to-be-confirmed new show are still in the works, according to UK rag The Daily Star, but you can bet that, if the price is right, this thing will happen.

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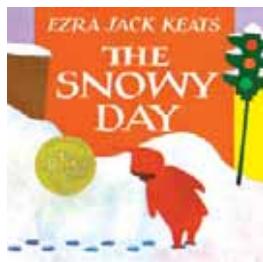
Book in some time for holiday reading

Brrr. It's time for all good children to curl up with a good book featuring snow. Here are eight to get you started or pass on to gifters.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

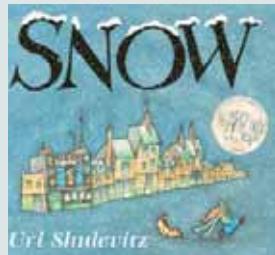
The Snowy Day — Ezra Jack Keats

Reprint edition from Puffin. This 1963 Caldecott Medal winner is the tranquil story of a city boy named Peter who bundles up for crunchy outdoor adventures after discovering it snowed overnight. Cutouts, watercolours and the Brooklyn-born creator's classic collage work. It's considered the first full-colour picture book to feature an African-American protagonist.



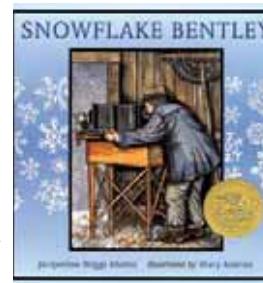
Snow — Uri Shulevitz

Reprint edition from Square Fish. First out in 1998. A hopeful "boy with dog" lives in a great, grey city inhabited by doubtful grown-ups transformed with the season's first snowflake. It earned Shulevitz, who survived the bombing of Warsaw as a boy, a Caldecott Honor and may be just the thing to cheer up a modern-day "grandfather with beard" who utters: "It's only a snowflake."



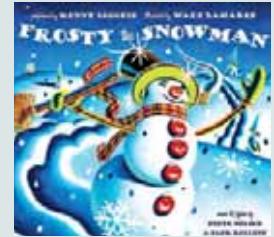
Snowflake Bentley — Jacqueline Briggs Martin

Reprint edition from HMH Books for Young Readers. Another Caldecott Medal winner, this one was also first published in 1998. It tells the story of Vermont's Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley, a self-educated farmer who combined a microscope and an old bellows camera to become the first person to photograph a single snow crystal in 1885.



Frosty the Snowman — Steve Nelson and Jack Rollins

Illustrated by Wade Zahares, this retelling of the seasonal song standard features a trippy looking Frosty in black top hat and green mittens. Includes a three-track CD with the song and others performed by Grammy winner Kenny Loggins.



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Super casting news

Momoa may join Batman vs. Superman

Will Jason Momoa get the same harsh treatment from fanboys as Ben Affleck did?

According to the Hollywood Reporter, the Game of Thrones star, who played Khal Drogo on the first season of the hit HBO fantasy, is in talks to join the cast of Batman vs. Superman, which is fast shaping up to be a sort of Love Actually of superheroes, at least in terms of cast size.

Batman vs. Superman stars Ben Affleck as Batman, I must inform you in case you just joined the Internet



Jason Momoa GETTY IMAGES

today. Henry Cavill will reprise his role as Superman and newcomer Israeli actress Gal Gadot will play Wonder Woman. The production hasn't announced what role Momoa would play in the film. Fans speculate that Momoa may be coming on board to play a villain.

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DC assembles future dream team

New 52. Writers tasked with writing a tale of how heroes change over time

Nearly three years after its debut, DC Comics is pushing its New 52 five years into the future with writers Jeff Lemire, Keith Giffen, Brian Azzarello and Dan Jurgens to examine how heroes change with the passing of time and technology.

The weekly title, The New 52: Futures End, debuts on Free Comic Book Day in May with the first issue of series hitting shelves and digital storefronts later that month.

It is the second such weekly book for DC in 2014. The other, Batman: Eternal, launches in the spring as DC celebrates Batman's 75th anniversary.

"Just look at the talent roster that's been gathered. How could you not want to be a part of that?" asked Giffen, who did layouts for

DC's weekly comic series 52 in 2006.

Hints about the series have been dropped by DC in recent weeks, with images of Batman Beyond online as well as a mention in the DC All Access web series that saw a pair of logo designs dubbed Five Years Later.

Lemire calls the new weekly series an exploration of DC's past, present and its future.

"Really, what we're trying to do with this book is to explore the nature of what a hero is and we're doing that, obviously by playing with the future of the New 52 timeline," he said.

"Past present and future all colliding in this story line."

That means exploring the past with a character like Frankenstein, the present with Firestorm and the future with Batman Beyond who is, Lemire said, making what is his first "in-continuity" appearance. He'll become part of the New 52."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



The New 52: Futures End debuts on Free Comic Book Day in May. CONTRIBUTED

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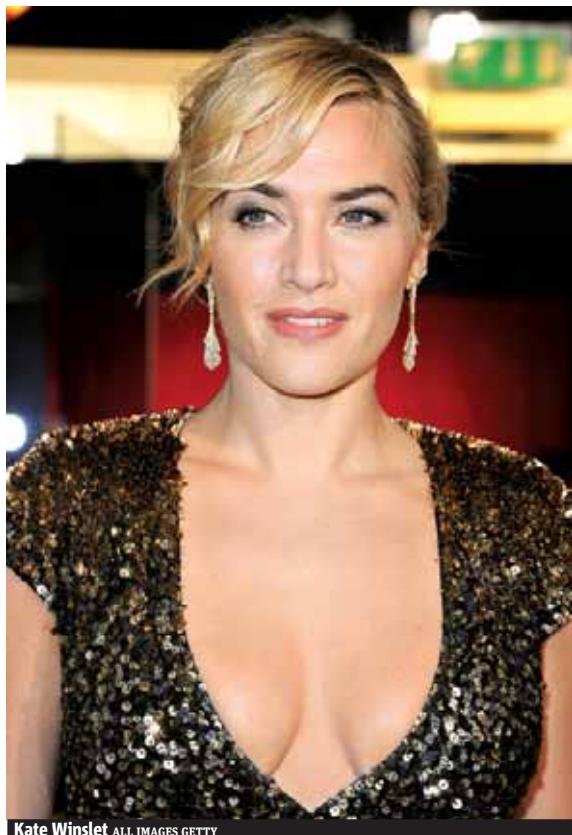
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Kate Winslet ALL IMAGES GETTY

It's only baby Rocknroll but mommy Kate likes him, likes him, yes she does

Kate Winslet is a new mom once again. The Oscar winner gave birth to a son, her first kid with new husband Ned Rocknroll, Saturday in the U.K., her rep confirms to People magazine. "Baby and mother are doing great," her rep

says, though more information about the boy — including his name — wasn't disclosed. Winslet also has a daughter, Mia, from her marriage to Jim Threapleton and a son, Joe, with second husband Sam Mendes.

Streisand acts as catalyst for amicable Lane and Brolin split

Diane Lane orchestrated a fairly smooth split from ex-husband Josh Brolin thanks reportedly in large part to an unlikely ally: Brolin's stepmother, Barbra Streisand. "She made it clear she would help Diane get everything she needed in her split from her own husband's son," a source tells Radar Online. "Barbra made it

clear the divorce needed to go smoothly for the sake of the kids." Things went so smoothly, in fact, that Brolin reportedly turned down an offer to play Batman in the upcoming Man of Steel sequel because Lane will be reprising her role as Clark Kent's mother. "He didn't want to make Diane uncomfortable," the source says. "They're really going to be fine as a divorced couple. Josh admits he's too much of a 'bad boy' to be married to one woman, and Diane and Barbra and even his father James Brolin agree completely."

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word



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@ElizabethHurley
Pea souper in London today.



@josswhedon
Movies teach us that a man with daddy issues is a HERO and a man with mommy issues is a sexually dysfunctional serial killer.



@TomArnold
I've officially lost 80 pounds. Now even my gay friends are complimenting me.



Demi Moore

Broken-hearted Moore ringing in the changes

Now that her divorce from Ashton Kutcher is finalized, Demi Moore is reportedly rushing to erase anything that reminds her of him from

her life — including the engagement ring he got her, which she quietly sold recently, according to Star magazine. "Ashton broke her heart," a source says. "Anything that reminds her of him makes her sad, and she wants to be happy." Moore sold the five-carat, emerald-cut anonymously on consignment for \$250,000, the source claims.

Trends Report



Joseph Nogucci is an up-and-coming Canadian fashion accessories brand built by Toronto architecture and engineering students, Mario Christian and Luca Daniel. Go online to Trends Report to read about how the duo transformed sketches that were meant for buildings into designs for bracelets and beads.

Follow Irene on twitter @MetrolreneK or Instagram: kuanirene

www.metronews.ca/voices/trends-report

The year in colour

Orchid is growing on us

Radiant Orchid, a version of the purple hue is Pantone Inc.'s colour of the year for 2014. It follows this year's pick of emerald green.

Officially known as Radiant Orchid, the tropical shade is a colour-wheel contrast to green, said Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute. "It's a little different, it's a little off the beaten path, and it's not a primary colour," she explains. "It's an invitation to innovation." **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**



Alice Smith doesn't 'speak makeup'

Natural woman.

The soul singer loves her beauty products — she just doesn't always like wearing them. She tells us about her Ramona Quimby hair and her trick to never waking up with dry skin (hint: it rhymes with sheep).

**ROMINA
MC GUINESS**
Metro World News

Alice Smith's deep lyrical voice is so soothing it could almost put you to sleep. Luckily, the one-time Grammy-nominee won't take offence if you do. Why? Because she believes that sleep is nature's way of helping you look pretty and fresh faced.

"Eye bags are a sign that you either need to take a break or go to sleep. So if I'm working late one night, I just make sure I drink a lot of water and go straight to bed. That's it," she explains from her home in Brooklyn. And for those rare moments when shut-eye isn't enough? "In that case I'll use a little bit of MAC Studio Finish Concealer," she adds.



Alice Smith's second album *She* was released in March. **ALEX ELENA**

Letting her skin make its own oil

"I wash my face with Sothys Cleansing Cream twice a day, and in the morning I follow up with their Hydradvice Light Hydrating Cream. I don't put anything on at night because that's when your skin is busy working and making oil. You just have to make sure you use really good stuff. So far, I've never woken up with dry skin. I also see my facialist, Mamie McDonald, about once every six

weeks and she just does what she needs to do. I always leave with a really clean face!"

Not needing foundation — ever

"I love makeup, but I don't speak makeup. I don't wear a lot of it because it's not good for your complexion. But if I feel a little washed out, I'll do my eyebrows up a little and put some mascara on. But I never wear foundation — ever. Definitely not when I'm on stage. I want to be able to touch my face and it's not like

I'm a big sweater, but I might sweat. So I just don't see the point. When I'm performing, I stick to brows, lashes and lips. I love a burnt sienna lipstick but you have to be really feeling it to pull such a bold colour off. And I always carry a tin of Burt's Bees Beeswax Lip Balm with me."

don't think it was meant to be that colour...but I liked it. I had a fringe and a short bob, which made me look like Ramona Quimby! I'd love to dye my hair again but I think I'm just afraid of how it would turn out."

Her new album She and making it through the music industry unscathed

"It feels like a lifetime ago that I released my first album but I've always had a lot of support. My family and my friends have always been there for me. I'm not any different. I think I'm just older. I have a three-year-old daughter now, and she's made me re-evaluate and re-examine who I am and who I need to be. For me it's about what kind of person I'm trying to encourage her to be — how to be successful, how to care for herself. And because the only way to teach things is to show, I need to be able to show her how to do all that."

Her 'Ramona Quimby' hair

"I used to dye my hair in college and it was like orange! I

Her beauty icons

"I love Sade...I've always thought she was so beautiful."

Alice lets us take a peek inside her makeup bag

L'Oréal Voluminous Mascara

'I love this because it doesn't come off or flake up. You're not going to have any mascara sitting under your lashes.'



Stila Stay All Day Waterproof Liquid Eye Liner

'I'm always on the road and they sell this at Sephora, meaning I can always get my hands on one when I run out.'



MAC Cosmetics Mineralize Skinfinish Natural Powder

'I use this as a highlighter. I like the fact it blends in really nicely and doesn't make my face shine.'



NARS Cosmetics Velvet Matte Lip Pencil in Dragon Girl

'I love the fact I can use this to colour my entire lip in one go.'



Mac Eye Brows in spiked

'This is perfect for when you want to add depth to your brows.'



Take it back to historic foodie basics



This recipe makes 80 mackeroons. ALL IMAGES: PAT CROCKER, FROM SETTING A FINE TABLE: HISTORICAL DESSERTS AND DRINKS FROM THE OFFICERS' KITCHENS AT FORT YORK (WHITECAP BOOKS)

"Today, mackeroons (now spelled macaroons) are a meringue made with coconut, but until the mid-19th century they contained finely chopped or pounded sweet almonds," notes *Setting A Fine Table*. "Recipes for mackeroons appeared frequently in 17th- and 18th-century cookery books, with varying ratios of sugar to egg whites. Mackeroons were served with wines and liqueurs, or were crushed and layered in trifles or with syllabubs and creams.

"Orange blossom water and rosewater, both made by steeping the flower blossoms in brandy or distilled water, were characteristic flavourings for this biscuit (cookie)."

"Musk, another popular

flavouring, is an aromatic substance produced by the male musk-deer. It is still an important ingredient in perfumery, but is no longer considered edible.

"By the mid-19th century, vanilla had displaced these flavourings."

Historic recipe

1. Take a pound of almonds, let them be scalded, blanched, and thrown into cold water, then dry them in a cloth, and pound them in a mortar, moisten them with orange-flower water, or with the white of an egg, lest they turn to oil; afterwards, take an equal quantity of fine powder sugar, with three or four whites of eggs, and a little musk, beat all well together,

and shape them on wafer-paper, with a spoon round: bake them in a gentle oven on tin plates. **THE ART OF COOKERY MADE PLAIN AND EASY (HANNAH GLASSE, 1796)**

Modern Equivalent

1. Line 2 rimless baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a food processor, chop the almonds, scraping down the sides of the bowl from

time to time, until they are the consistency of very coarse sand with some slightly larger pieces. Set aside.

3. In a separate large bowl, beat the egg whites with the orange flower water until soft peaks form. Add the sugar about 2 tbsp (30 ml) at a time, beating until stiff peaks form. Sprinkle the chopped almonds over the egg white mixture and fold in
4. Drop by rounded teaspoonsfuls (6 ml) about 1 inch (2.5 cm) apart onto the prepared baking sheets. Bake in the centre of a 325 F (160 C) oven until they are dry to the touch, but still white, and lift easily off the parchment paper, about 12 to 15 minutes.

to distribute evenly.

5. Let cool on the pans on a rack. **RECIPE EXCERPTED FROM SETTING A FINE TABLE: HISTORICAL DESSERTS AND DRINKS FROM THE OFFICERS' KITCHENS AT FORT YORK" (WHITECAP BOOKS) EDITED BY ELIZABETH BAIRD AND BRIDGET WRANICH**

Modern Ingredients

- 3 cups (750 ml) whole blanched almonds
- 4 medium egg whites (1/2 cup/125 ml)
- 2 tsp (10 ml) orange flower water
- 2 cups (500 ml) superfine granulated sugar

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HOLIDAY FUN

Thursday, December 12, 2013



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Warm up to these winter activities

JASON
MENARD
For Metro

The weather outside may, at times, be frightful, but that doesn't mean you can't make the most of the winter season. Whether you are with that special someone or a group of old friends, there are plenty of opportunities to enjoy the winter weather.

So, without further ado, here are a few fun activities designed to help adults make the most out of the winter weather.

A walk through the park: There is something about the magic of lightly falling snow at night reflected in the lights alongside a park path.

Skating: Most cities have wonderful outdoor skating facilities if you are just looking for a casual skate with that special someone. And if you want to get a crew together, you can rent an hour or two of ice at the local rink and engage in a game of shinny.

Skating: Cross-country or downhill, Canadians have



Enjoy a casual skate during the holidays. MARIDAV/SHUTTERSTOCK

derland for many people in need.

Decorate your home: As long as you don't go all Griswold, decorating your home with lights is a gift that gives to everyone in your neighbourhood.

Go ice fishing: If the ice is thick enough in your neck of the woods, ice fishing is a surprisingly popular and relaxing activity.

Help a neighbour shovel their walk: It may not seem fun, but the satisfaction of helping an elderly neighbour out sure feels good.

Enjoy some mulled wine or apple cider: Or if hot chocolate is your drink, that's OK, too. And, as an adult, no one will mind if you decide to make that beverage a little more "festive" as you enjoy your holiday cheer.

Sure, you can curse the winter weather and spend a few months in a self-imposed cocoon, but with so many amazing winter opportunities out there, you owe it to yourself to see why cold-weather activities can really warm you up.

Winter can be snow much fun

JASON
MENARD
For Metro

Keep kids busy during the holidays with some of the following activities.

Skating: Most cities have one or more public outdoor rinks. There is nothing like the experience of skating outside and it's a great way to spend some quality time with your children. If the weather isn't co-operating, most rinks also offer public skating opportunities.

Snow fort/snowball fights: If the snow is the right type and there's enough of it, why not head out to the park or your backyard and introduce your kids to the joys of building (and defending) a snow fort. And if you get too tired, feel free to lie down and make snow angels.

Tobogganing: Whether you prefer the traditional wooden sleds, have invested in one of those high-tech versions, or are willing to throw

caution to the wind with those crazy carpets, all you need to do is head off to the nearest hill and throw yourself down it.

Winter sports: We often think about hockey, but there are many other winter sports you may want to attend as a spectator. From basketball to roller derby, there is usually a game somewhere.

Make a bird feeder: You can buy one at the store or make one out of a pine cone. But however you do it, those hungry birds will appreciate it.

Attend a winter carnival: Most communities have some sort of event during the winter. Get together with neighbours, take the kids, and make an annual event of it.

But no matter what you do, don't forget to spend a few minutes afterwards re-capping the event and spending some quality time with your kid or kids bonding over a cup of hot chocolate.



Tobogganing can be a fun family bonding experience during the holidays. CATHERINE YEULET/ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK



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Critters all through the house

Pawed, clawed, tailed, scaled, beaked, snouted, winged and web-footed: Animals are a delight at any time of year, but what better season than Christmas to have a merry menagerie about? Add creatures big and small to your holiday decor scheme, or give a gilded beast as a gift. This year, it's a snap to source your choice of fauna in two favourite finishes, white or gold.



DESIGN
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Karl Lohnes
home.metronews.ca

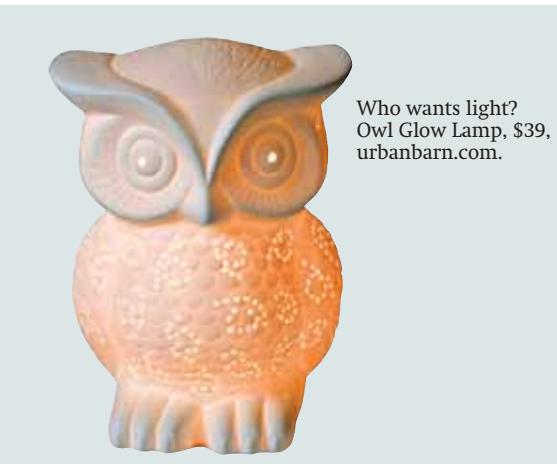


Create wintery-wild drinks with this Polar Bear Cocktail Shaker, \$92, potterybarn.com.

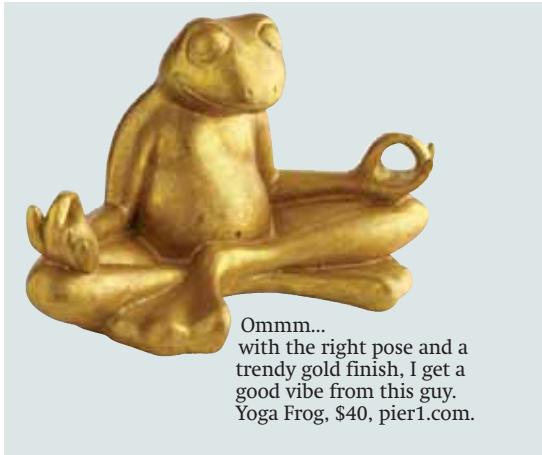
From the designer's debut collection of animal curiosities, Kate Spade New York's Woodland Park Cat/Dog Salt & Pepper Set, \$30, thebay.com.



Adorable and shiny, this bear keeps your coins safe. Sleeping Bear Bank, \$18 US, urbanoutfitters.com.



Who wants light? Owl Glow Lamp, \$39, urbanbarn.com.



Ommm... with the right pose and a trendy gold finish, I get a good vibe from this guy. Yoga Frog, \$40, pier1.com.



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Holiday cocktail party stars

Say you don't like your holiday decor all twee and buttoned up. Typical Christmas themes — country charm, Scandinavian-influenced restraint, Victorian opulence, clean-lined urban chic — all feel a bit limiting after a while. You'd prefer something unexpected, a bit of visual wit. Something that will truly delight, in the way that any self-respecting festival of lights should. So we went in search of seasonal sparkle that doubles as conversation pieces. Here's what we found.

Mantelpiece magic

Part of the brilliance of thin wire light strings such as these is that they're easy to bend and form into shapes. Starry String Lights in Diamond with silver wire finish or Amber with copper wire finish, \$15-\$99; and French Glass Cloches, \$69-99; all restorationhardware.com.



Crystal palace

A grouping of these lanterns would look like a constellation of giant snowflakes. Pizzelle paper lanterns, \$42-\$55 US each, and white battery-powered triple LED light, \$4.95 US each, all lunabazaar.com.



Mirror, mirror

Does anything say eclectic modern holiday like a disco-ball gnome? This creature from CB2 is so popular he's back-ordered until early December, but well, some things are worth waiting for. If it's a conversation piece you're after, look no further. Disco gnome, \$149, cb2.com.



Cheeky charm

Who would have thought that simple mirrored ornaments could have so much personality? We can't help smiling at these. Retro Mirror Star and Asterisk Holiday Ornaments, set of four, \$18 at studiolicious.etsy.com.



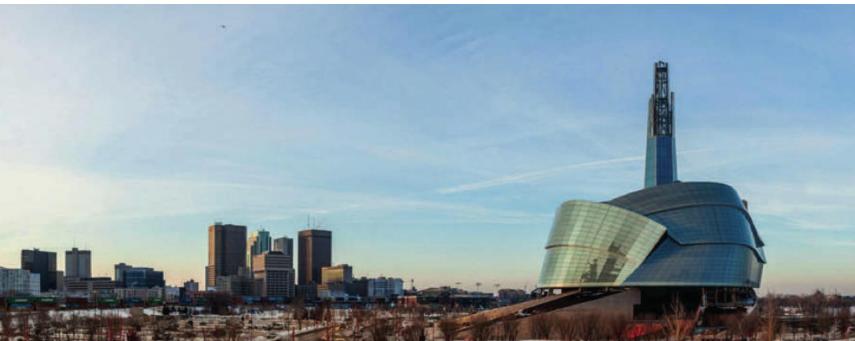
Shadow boxing

Anthropologie sister site Terrain doesn't ship to Canada, which leaves you with two options. One, if you have any U.S. relatives asking for your wish list, send them a link to shopterrain.com and let them figure out the rest. Two, if you're DIY-minded, take inspiration from their Gilded Shadow Box. Source a frame from a craft-supply store, then find bits and bobs to create a magical vignette.



Gem of a find

If you gave a product designer a brief that said, "quirky and glowing," this could very well be the result — and that's before you add the deer antlers. Hearts, stars and various gem-like shapes adorn these indoor light strings. Strala light chain, 16 bulbs, \$16.99, Ikea.



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KEEPING IT IN THE COMMUNITY

Canadians are radically reassessing how they spend their money by focusing primarily on cost and quality, according to an American Express study. This renewed focus on value for money and quality goes hand-in-hand with a new type of consumer behaviour in which Canadians seek products and services that are in line with their personal values and that support both their local and national economies.

"Canadians are increasingly looking for meaning in their purchases, so when they buy products they are asking questions about whether the product is ethically made or environmentally friendly," says retail consultant Anthony Stokan, partner at Anthony Russell and Associates in Toronto. "People are looking for a closer relationship with what they buy by choosing local products and retailers."

The report, American Express: Consumer Spending Futures: The New Era

of Pause and Purchase, classifies four key consumer spending trends that have emerged and looks ahead to see how new technologies, changing social norms and increased brand transparency are causing a significant shift in the way consumers will shop and spend in the future.

The savviest spenders in Canada now consider so much more than just cost. There is a 180-degree turnaround from the last decade where consumption was conspicuous. Now people are buying to make a statement about the kind of world in which they want to live.

Urban consumers report that they are shifting their habits towards those of their rural neighbours, seeking more local, homegrown and community-focused interactions, both in person and online. This group, referred to as SLEDS (supporting local economies through direct spending), buys to be part of its local community and



GOODLUZ/ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK

is shopping for more sustainable products that protect the environment.

About 36 per cent of Canadians say they want to be a greater part of the local community, therefore they buy from local brands and vendors. Almost half (47 per cent) say the availability of locally-sourced or locally-made products affects their spending today. About 46 per cent

say they were more aware of their environmental impact as consumers.

In the coming years, more consumers will continue to patronize smaller, community shops, local vendors and brands. Additionally, more ethical products will be prioritized as consumers make choices that promote a more self-sufficient, sustainable lifestyle. — Metro News Services



CONTRIBUTED

REWIND CLOTHING IS THE PERFECT ADDITION

Not one to let a flood bring her down, Rewind Consignment Clothing owner Krista Hopfauf and her trendy clothing store are back in its original location.

While Rewind was temporarily relocated after June's devastating floods, Hopfauf is happy to be settling back into its unique 1002 Macleod Trail SE location and still features brands such as Theory, Marc Jacobs, Alexander Wang, Lululemon, Coach, Michael Kors, and more.

"Rewind is very selective with its mer-

chandise, taking only designer and popular labels and styles fit for stylish, trendy women, making it easy to find the perfect pieces to add to your closet and create your own unique sense of style," she says. "Prices are competitive and the store itself has character as it is situated in a heritage building, which is rare in Calgary."

Rewind carries women's clothing and accessories, including shoes, boots, bags, belts and a variety of clothing, both new and resale. Most of the new labels are

Canadian and most of the jewelry is made by artisans in Calgary.

"Little extras Rewind provides to those interested are private shopping parties outside of business hours at no charge, a personal styling service and ongoing promotions through our website, Facebook and Twitter."

Rewind has a wide selection of new clothing including dresses, tops, jackets, leggings, leg warmers, and assorted jewelry and accessories from local designers.



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REDISCOVER YOUR FAVOURITE LOCAL STORES

As the busiest time of the holiday shopping season is at its peak, Calgarians are encouraged to shop local at one of the several thousand businesses attempting to recover from June's devastating floods.

While the majority of the 4,000 businesses impacted by the disaster have reopened for business, there are still 30 closed, according to Calgary Economic Development VP of marketing, communication and research Mary Moran.

Although it's a huge success that the businesses have reopened at all, Moran says the next critical step is getting shoppers back through the businesses doors and there's no better time than now for holiday shopping.

"For the holiday season we're encouraging Calgarians to rediscover their favourite local stores or discover new favourites," Moran says. "We just want to see shoppers heading out and supporting local business, especially those struggling to overcome the impact of the disaster."

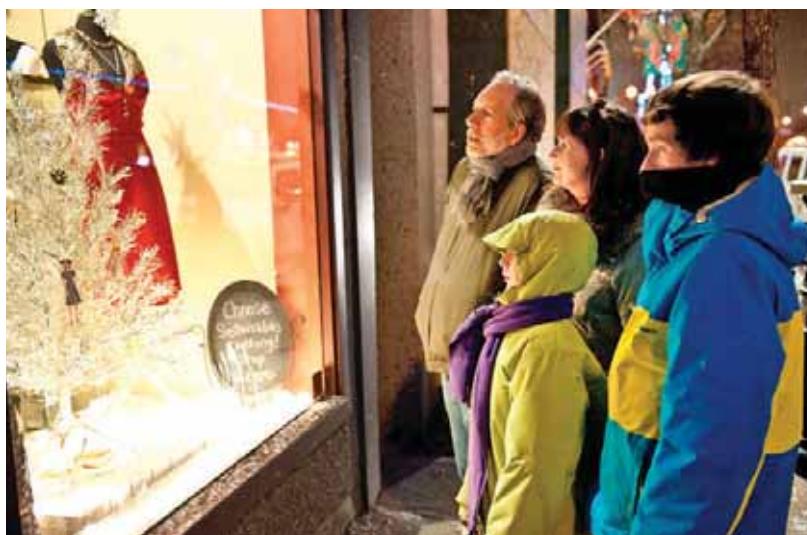
Moran hopes the city is able to overcome a disturbing statistic found in cities where other natural disasters have struck. Previous surveys have found that 25 per



cent of businesses affected fail after the damage is done.

Shoppers who choose to support local don't only have the chance to help out local businesses, but find unique gifts and products that you can't find just anywhere, Moran says.

"It's a win-win situation really. The businesses will be able to get back on their feet while shoppers are able to find a diverse selection of one-of-a-kind products and gifts that can't be duplicated."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

The Calgary Foundation is one of several organizations that is partnering with Calgary Economic Development to help attract shoppers back into flood-affected zones and has been fostering strong communities through its Neighbour Grants program since 1999.

"We believe that neighbourhoods are the lifeblood of a city," says Calgary

Foundation communications co-ordinator Taylor Barrie. "Neighbourhoods thrive when everyone participates. A strong neighbourhood is reflected not only with parks, schools and recreation spaces, but also in active and engaged citizenship. Small businesses are often the anchor of many neighbourhoods, supporting a variety of community activities."



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Curling

2015 Brier will be played at the Saddledome

The Tim Hortons Brier will be held at Calgary's Scotiabank Saddledome in 2015, the finale of a new Triple Crown series unveiled Wednesday by the Canadian Curling Association.

The Triple Crown will start with the 2014 Canada Cup, set for Dec. 3-7 at the Encana Arena in Camrose, Alta. It will be followed by the WFG Continental Cup from Jan. 8-11 at the Markin MacPhail Centre International Arena in Calgary and the series will be capped by the 2015 Brier from Feb. 28 to March 8.

It will be the fourth time the national men's curling championship will be contested at the Saddledome and the seventh time it will be staged in Calgary.

"We couldn't be happier to bring these three major curling events to Alberta," CCA chief executive officer Greg Stremlaw said in a release. "Curling fans all over the province have proven time and time again that they support and love our sport, and they will be treated to some amazing curling during the Triple Crown."

The Saddledome has hosted the Brier in 1997, 2002 and 2009. Calgary also played host in 1948, 1961 and 1980.

The 2015 event will be the first time the Brier will feature both a Team Canada entry and a pair of entries from a pre-qualifying round. The 2014 Brier will be held in Kamloops, B.C.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Marie-Philip Poulin jumps into the arms of teammate Caroline Ouellette after Canada defeated Finland to advance to the gold-medal game at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. CAMERON SPENCER/GETTY IMAGES

Poulin chomping at bit to make return

Women's hockey.

Canadian star forward will miss another exhibition game against U.S. with high ankle sprain

Canada is riding a three-game winning streak against the U.S. in women's hockey, but it hasn't been all smooth sailing for the Canadian women this winter.

Marie-Philip Poulin, who scored twice in Canada's win

over the U.S. in the 2010 Olympic final, remains sidelined for Thursday's game in Calgary against the Americans because of a high ankle sprain.

The talented, speedy forward from Beaupré, Que., is expected to be an impact player for the Canadian women again as they prepare to defend the gold in Sochi, Russia, in February.

However, the 22-year-old has appeared in just a handful of Canada's 32 games since September and none against the United States.

"It's been a tough one for sure," Poulin said Wednesday

at the Markin MacPhail Centre. "It's been almost three months now I've been out. It's tough, but I guess it's part of the game and it helps me build my mental toughness.

"It's always hard to miss a game, especially when you play the U.S."

An opposing player landed on the outside of her left ankle during a tournament against midget triple-A men's teams in September. Poulin re-injured the ankle in her third game back in November.

Poulin has set Dec. 28, when Canada plays the U.S. in St. Paul, Minn., as the next target date of her return.

6-game exhibition series

Thursday's exhibition game is the third of six between Canada and the U.S. this winter as both countries train full-time for the Winter Games.

- They'll square off again Dec. 20 in Grand Forks, N.D., followed by Dec. 28 in St. Paul, Minn., and then Dec. 30 in Toronto.

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Making up for lost time with losses



If the Flames do the necessary and sink to the bottom of the NHL standings, a talent, such as big Kootenay Ice centre Sam Reinhart, could be available to them in the 2014 NHL draft. GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS



THE HOCKEY
NEWS
Brian Costello
calgary@metronews.ca

A funny thing happened in the NHL Tuesday night. Each of the four teams below Calgary in the standings won and the Flames lost in regulation time. Even teams slightly ahead of Calgary got points — Columbus and Nashville two apiece, Ottawa and Carolina one each.

In other words, it was a perfect night for diehard Flames fans who are eager to expedite this rebuild. They know the best way to do that is to have a series of high draft picks.

Every Flames fan — ownership and management excluded — knew years ago this ride through death valley in the standings was coming. If Calgary isn't going to make the playoffs, then why not see them slip to 29th. Buffalo seemingly has a lock on 30th.

Finishing just ahead of the Sabres would guarantee the Flames a top-three pick in the draft. If the lottery balls

Silver lining

The message here is to hope for the best, like recent upset wins over Chicago and L.A., but be OK with hard-fought losses in which the Flames show plucky effort.

fall in Calgary's favour, they'd get one of crafty centre Sam Reinhart or stud defenceman Aaron Ekblad. Either would be a valuable addition to the Flames crop of prospects.

Finishing 25th or 26th isn't bad, either, but the odds of getting a first-line player or a 1-2 D-man are higher among the top two or three picks.

Don't misunderstand the message here. The intent isn't to cheer hard for loss after loss. This isn't the NBA where a half-dozen teams including the Toronto Raptors are fully embracing a roster tear-down in an explicit attempt to get the No. 1 draft pick (possibly Canadian star Andrew Wiggins).

The 2014 NHL draft doesn't have a franchise-type player. That's coming in 2015 with Connor McDavid.

The message here is to hope for the best, like recent upset wins over Chicago and L.A., but be OK with hard-fought losses in which the Flames show plucky effort. And if those losses come in regulation time (like Tuesday to Boston and Nov. 27 to Chicago), that's all the better. Flames fans don't want loser points.

Above all else, beat Edmonton. But make it happen in overtime or a shootout, like last Saturday. It's OK for the Oilers to get points and finish ahead of Calgary.

It's counterintuitive thinking for the most part. Your call if you want to be public about it or not. The losing is coming whether you like it or not. Accepting it as a good thing — if you're a fan — will make it easier to swallow.

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	31	21	8	2	86	62	44
Montreal	32	19	10	3	85	71	41
Detroit	32	15	9	8	87	85	38
Tampa Bay	30	17	10	3	85	76	37
Toronto	32	16	13	3	87	90	35
Ottawa	32	12	14	6	92	105	30
Florida	32	10	17	5	73	106	25
Buffalo	31	7	22	2	53	92	16

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	32	21	10	1	98	71	43
Washington	31	17	12	2	98	90	36
Carolina	32	13	13	6	75	91	32
NY Rangers	32	15	16	1	70	84	31
New Jersey	32	12	14	6	73	82	30
Columbus	31	13	15	3	78	86	29
Philadelphia	32	13	15	3	70	85	29
NY Islanders	32	9	18	5	80	111	23

Wednesday's results

Los Angeles 3 Toronto 1

Chicago 7 Philadelphia 2

Minnesota at Anaheim

Tuesday's results

Los Angeles 6 Montreal 0

Washington 6 Tampa Bay 5 (SO)

Buffalo 2 Ottawa 1 (SO)

Columbus 5 New Jersey 4

Nashville 4 NY Rangers 1

Florida 3 Detroit 2 (SO)

St. Louis 2 Winnipeg 1

Chicago 6 Dallas 2

Phoenix 3 Colorado 1

Boston 2 Calgary 1

Edmonton 5 Carolina 4 (OT)

NY Islanders 3 San Jose 2 (SO)

Dion Phaneuf, serving the first half of a two-game suspension for a weekend hit on Boston's Kevan Miller. But winger Jeffrey Lupul returned after a seven-game absence due to a groin tear.

The Leafs showed more jump than a Los Angeles team playing for the second night in a row but were unable to convert their advantage into goals.

Still, the Kings came in riding a season-high four-game winning streak, hot on the heels of a 6-0 win in Montreal, and were 11-1-4 in their last 16 games. THE CANADIAN PRESS

	G	A	Pts
Crosby, Pgh	16	27	43
Kane, Chi	17	23	40
Malkin, Pgh	8	30	38
Getzlaf, Ana	16	21	37
Tavares, NYI	12	24	38
Ovechkin, Wash	26	9	35
Perry, Ana	20	15	35
Steen, StL	21	12	33
Backstrom, Wash	7	25	32

Not including last night's games

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Indiana	19	3	.864	—
d-Miami	16	6	.727	3
Atlanta	11	11	.500	8
d-Boston	10	14	.417	10
Charlotte	10	12	.455	9
Washington	9	11	.450	9
Detroit	10	13	.435	9 ^{1/2}
Chicago	8	12	.400	10
Cleveland	8	13	.381	10 ^{1/2}
Toronto	7	13	.350	11
Brooklyn	7	14	.333	11 ^{1/2}
Orlando	7	15	.318	12
Philadelphia	7	16	.304	12 ^{1/2}
New York	6	15	.286	12 ^{1/2}
Milwaukee	5	17	.227	14

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Portland	18	4	.818	—
Oklahoma City	17	4	.810	1 ^{1/2}
d-San Antonio	17	4	.810	1 ^{1/2}
d-LA Clippers	15	8	.652	3 ^{1/2}
Houston	15	7	.682	3
Denver	13	8	.619	4 ^{1/2}
Dallas	13	9	.591	5
Phoenix	12	9	.571	5 ^{1/2}
Golden State	12	10	.545	6
Minnesota	11	11	.500	7
New Orleans	10	10	.500	7
Memphis	10	11	.476	7 ^{1/2}
L.A. Lakers	10	11	.476	7 ^{1/2}
Sacramento	6	13	.316	10 ^{1/2}
Utah	4	19	.174	14 ^{1/2}
Wednesday's results				
Orlando 92 Charlotte 83				
L.A. Clippers 96 Boston 88				
San Antonio 109 Milwaukee 77				
New Orleans 111 Detroit 106 OT				
Minnesota 106 Philadelphia 99				
New York 83 Chicago 78				
Oklahoma City 116 Memphis 100				
Utah at Sacramento				
Dallas at Golden State				
Tuesday's results				
San Antonio 116 Toronto 103				
Cleveland 109 New York 94				
Indiana 90 Miami 84				
Minnesota 121 Detroit 94				
Oklahoma City 101 Atlanta 92				
Brooklyn 104 Boston 96				
Milwaukee 78 Chicago 74				
Phoenix 114 L.A. Lakers 108				
Thursday's games				
L.A. Clippers at Brooklyn, 8 p.m.				
Houston at Portland, 10:30 p.m.				

NFL

Hits no longer welcome at home

Major League Baseball plans to eliminate home-plate collisions.

New York Mets general manager Sandy Alderson, chairman of the rules committee, made the announcement Wednesday at the winter meetings. He said player health and increased awareness of concussions were behind the decision.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL

Welker shelved against Chargers

Wes Welker won't play Thursday night against San Diego as he recovers from his second concussion in less than a month.

Broncos coach John Fox officially ruled him out Wednesday.

The NFL's protocol for concussed players would have allowed Welker only to participate in light practice Thursday and only if he had passed baseline cognitive tests earlier in the week.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Kings winger Jeff Carter and Leafs defenceman Mark Fraser collide on Wednesday in Toronto.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Martin Jones, a 23-year-old rookie from North Vancouver, earned his fourth straight win in four career NHL starts for Los Angeles with ex-Leaf Ben Scrivens on the bench. Kings No. 1 Jonathan Quick is out injured.

Jones came into the game with a .973 save percentage and a 0.65 goals-against average. He had stopped 73 of 75 shots and hadn't been beaten in 142 minutes and 46 seconds.

Cody Franson scored for Toronto (16-13-3), which deserved better on the night. The Leafs were without captain and top defenceman

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